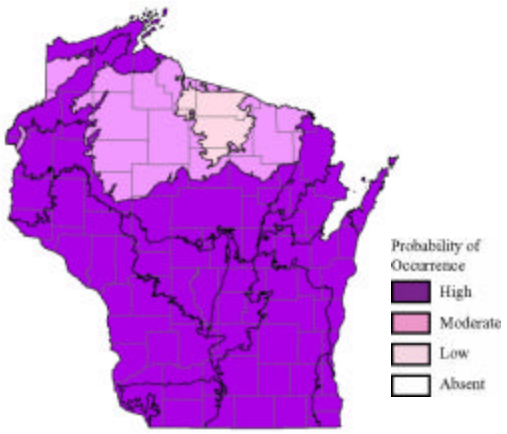
Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)

Species Assessment Scores*

State rarity:	3
State threats:	4
State population trend:	5
Global abundance:	2
Global distribution:	2
Global threats:	3
Global population trend:	4
Mean Risk Score:	3.3
Area of importance:	4

* Please see the Descriptio n of Vertebrate Species Summaries (Section 3.1.1) for definitions of criteria and scores.



Ecological Landscape Associations
Please note that this is not a range map. Shading does not imply that the species is present throughout the Landscape, but represents the probability that the species occurs somewhere in the Landscape.

Landscape -community Combinations of Highest Ecological Priority

Ecological Landscape	Community
Central Sand Hills	Wet-mesic prairie
Central Sand Plains	Northern sedge meadow
Central Sand Plains	Surrogate grasslands
Northern Lake Michigan Coastal	Northern sedge meadow
Northwest Sands	Northern sedge meadow
Northwest Sands	Surrogate grasslands
Southeast Glacial Plains	Dry-mesic prairie
Southeast Glacial Plains	Mesic prairie
Southeast Glacial Plains	Surrogate grasslands
Southeast Glacial Plains	Wet-mesic prairie
Southern Lake Michigan Coastal	Wet-mesic prairie
Southwest Savanna	Dry-mesic prairie
Southwest Savanna	Mesic prairie
Southwest Savanna	Surrogate grasslands
Western Coulee and Ridges	Dry-mesic prairie
Western Coulee and Ridges	Surrogate grasslands
Western Prairie	Mesic prairie
Western Prairie	Surrogate grasslands

Threats and Issues

- Succession of grassland habitats to shrubland and woodland, due to lack of fire or other management to supress woody growth.
- Intensification of agriculture, including early and frequent harvest of hay and conversion of idle grassland to row crops or tree plantations.
- Loss of grassland habitat due to development.
- Disturbance of grassland nesting cover during the breeding season.

- Bobolinks benefit from light to moderate grazing, but overgrazing is a threat.
- Invasive woody plants can degrade the quality of nesting grasslands, if woody canopy cover exceeds 30%. Other invasive species, including yellow parsnip, crown vetch, leafy spurge, thistles, reed canary grass, and some goldenrods can degrade habitat quality of grasslands for this species.
- Agricultural pesticides may pose a threat in certain cases on winter, migration, and breeding grounds.

Priority Conservation Actions

- Continue agricultural set-aside programs, especially those that allow for permanent protection of preferred habitats.
- Work with planning and zoning authorities to protect valuable open grassland landscapes from being converted to urban or suburban development.
- Create incentives for delaying hay harvest until after the primary breeding season. Bollinger *et al.* (1990) recommended that conservation lands be hayed every 2-3 years, with cutting not to begin before mid-July. Hay should be removed to prevent thatch build-up. Will tolerate light, but not heavy, grazing, with grass heights of 8-12 inches. Burns should be conducted every 2-5 years, but do not burn all of one unit in one year (Jones and Vickery 1997).
- Partnerships are key for conserving this species in working agricultural landscapes.